United Nations

Daily Highlights

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WEDNESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Secretary-General, in Phnom Penh, announces Prince Sihanouk's decision to remain Chairman of Supreme National Council until May elections and formation of Government.

+ Security Council, in Presidential statement last night, demands immediate cessation of hostilities in Nagorno-Karabakh and withdrawal of Armenian forces from Kelbadjar district of Azerbaijan.

+ Timetables established by General Peace Agreement for Mozambique are "unrealistic" and elections originally planned for October will have to be rescheduled, according to report by Secretary-General.

+ Commander of UNPROFOR in Bosnia and Herzegovina, General Philippe Morillon, warns Bosnian Serb authorities of "serious developments" that deteriorating situation in Srebrenica might provoke.

+ Security Council recommends that General Assembly admit to United Nations membership former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, which would bring to 181 total number of United Nations Member States.

+ Secretary-General recommends to Security Council that it extend mandate of United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission for further six-month period until September.

+ Secretary-General says UNITA radio attacks on Special Representative for Angola contravene Security Council resolution and prejudice forthcoming peace talks.

+ Secretary-General calls on Member States for voluntary financial contributions to United Nations Peace-keeping Force in Cyprus in shortfall of $204 million.

+ Western Asian Regional Preparatory Meeting begins work for United Nations International Conference on Population and Development in 1994.

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For information media--not an official record

Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali today announced that, at his request, Prince Norodom Sihanouk would continue as Chairman of the Supreme National Council of Cambodia until the elections on 23 May and the formation of the elected Assembly and Government.

United Nations forces will leave Cambodia after 22 August and Cambodians would then be responsible for solving their own problems, he told a press conference in Phnom Penh at the start of his two-day visit to the country. Asked if the National Army of Democratic Kampuchea (NADK) would be punished for the killing of three Bulgarian peace-keepers, he said the United Nations did not have an enforcement mission; the problem would have to be solved through dialogue and diplomacy.

The United Nations had several successes in Cambodia, he said, including Prince Sihanouk's leadership and support, the preparation for the elections, and the return of over 300,000 refugees to their villages. The Organization sought to provide the maximum security for its personnel and for the representatives of non-governmental organizations and the press. "We must protect them, we must help them in their mission," he said.

The Secretary-General went on to say that the concepts of peace, development and democracy were related; they were the new themes of the United Nations, which was working all over the world to reinforce them.

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The Security Council last night demanded the immediate cessation of hostilities in Nagorno-Karabakh and the withdrawal of Armenian forces from the Kelbadjar district of Azerbaijan. The Council met at the request of Azerbaijan, which in letters to the Security Council had protested the military offensive by Armenian forces in the Kelbadjar and Lachin districts of the country.

In a statement read out on its behalf by its President, Jamsheed K.A. Marker (Pakistan), the Council expressed serious concern at the deterioration of relations between Armenia and Azerbaijan. It urged the parties involved in the conflict to advance the peace process initiated by the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). The Council also called for unimpeded access for international humanitarian relief efforts in the region, and asked Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali to submit urgently a report on the situation.

Meanwhile, in a letter to the President of the Council, dated 3 April, Mustafa Aksin, Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations, said the Armenian aggression was a serious blow to Turkey's efforts to secure a peaceful solution to the conflict. He said the offensive constituted "a provocation which would have grave consequences to peace and security in a very sensitive region contiguous to Turkey".

Iran has also expressed concern over the "intensification of military operations" and killing of innocent people in the region. In a press release

issued by its Permanent Mission to the United Nations today, the Foreign Ministry of Iran called for the withdrawal of Armenian forces from the occupied territory of Azerbaijan and warned that a continuation of the "present approach" would bring about "a murky future for both countries and the Caucasus in its entirety".

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Despite some positive developments in Mozambique, it now seemed evident that many of the timetables established by the General Peace Agreement for Mozambique had "proved to be unrealistic" and that the elections originally planned for October would have to be rescheduled, according to Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali.

In his report to the Security Council, dated 2 April, he welcomed the fact that the cease-fire was holding and that the parties -- the Government of Mozambique and the Mozambique National Resistence Movement (RENAMO) -- had continued to exercise restraint. He also noted the positive role of Zimbabwean and Malawian troops in Mozambique, which had contributed to keep open the transport corridors running across Mozambique to neighbouring land-locked nations.

There were however, the Secretary-General wrote, several reasons for concern, including the delay in the deployment of formed units of the United Nations Operation in Mozambique (ONUMOZ). The example of ONUMOZ demonstrated the importance of quick response by troop-contributing countries to United Nations requests -- an aspect which had become one of the crucial elements the Secretariat was usually faced with at the initial stages of many peace-keeping undertakings, he said.

With regard to the political and social life in Mozambique, the Secretary-General emphasized that it was essential that RENAMO be allowed to assume a proper role in the country's internal affairs. That problem would have to be worked out by the Mozambicans themselves, he noted, if the peace process was to succeed. He called on the parties to get together to contribute to the solution of outstanding problems, such as the timetable for the cease-fire arrangements and the assembly of troops and their demobilization.
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** Commander of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) in Bosnia and Herzegovina, General Philippe Morillon, today warned the Bosnian Serb authorities of the "serious developments" that the deteriorating situation in Srebrenica might provoke. The warning was issued upon instructions from UNPROFOR Force Commander, Lieutenant General Lars-Eric Wahlgren.

According to a statement issued today at Headquarters, General Morillon would travel to Srebrenica today. An advance party of UNPROFOR troops from

the Canadian batallion would also leave for Srebrenica early this afternoon and was expected to reach the city tomorrow morning.

Meanwhile, UNPROFOR Force Commander Wahlgren said that all three parties to the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina had committed themselves to continuing the cease-fire which came into effect on 28 March, and which had generally held since.

The agreement came at a brief meeting at Sarajevo airport today, attended by delegations from all three Bosnian parties, as well as from Croatia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro).

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The Security Council this morning recommended that the General Assembly admit to United Nations membership the State provisionally being referred to for all purposes within the Organization as 'the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia', pending settlement of the difference that has arisen over the name of the State.

The Council took that action by adopting, without a vote, resolution 817 (1993), noting that the difference which had arisen over the name of that State needed to be resolved in the interest of maintaining peaceful relations in the region. The Council welcomed the readiness of the Co-Chairmen of the Steering Committee of the International Conference on the former Yugoslavia to use their good offices to settle the matter and promote confidence-building measures among the parties. The parties were urged to cooperate with the Co-Chairmen to arrive at a speedy settlement of their differences.

After the adoption of the resolution, the Council President, Jamsheed K.A. Marker (Pakistan), read out a statement on behalf of Council members. He stressed that the reference in the resolution to the "former Yugoslav Republic" carried no implication whatsoever that the State concerned had any connection with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro). It merely reflected the historic fact that that State had been in the past a republic of the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, he said.

The admission of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia will bring to 181 the total membership of the United Nations.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has recommended to the Security Council that it extend the mandate of the United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission (UNIKOM) for a further six-month period until September. The recommendation was contained in a new report to the Security Council outlining the activities of UNIKOM during the last six months.

In his report, the Secretary-General writes that events in January on the border between Iraq and Kuwait "have demonstrated the value of United Nations presence" there. "Considerable tension" arose in mid-January when Iraq

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proceeded to remove property from the Naval Base, Umm Qasr, which had been placed on Kuwaiti territory as a result of the newly demarcated boundary between Iraq and Kuwait. UNIKOM reacted promptly to these actions and made strong representations to the Iraqi military authorities. The Secretary-General regrets that Iraq "did not respond positively" to those démarches until member countries threatened by using force.

In a related development, Iraq has asked that an "objective appraisal" be made on whether or not the country remains in breach of Security Council resolution 687 (1991), setting the terms for the cease-fire in the Persian Gulf war. The Iraqi request was contained in a letter to the President of the Security Council, written in response to a warning by France, the Russian Federation, the United States and the United Kingdom of serious "consequences" if Iraq continued to refuse to fulfil its obligations under the resolution.

In the letter, the Iraqi Government said the statement by the four Permanent Council Members "bears no relation to the true state of affairs and uses generalities in order to mislead". Iraq therefore asked for an appraisal to be undertaken by a delegation appointed by Iraq and a delegation appointed by the four Powers in question, with the participation of the fifth Permanent Security Council member, namely China.
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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has expressed deep concern about attacks on his Special Representative for Angola, Margaret J. Anstee, aired by a radio station run by the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA). He said the attacks contravened Security Council resolution 811 (1993) and were counter-productive to the peace talks due to begin on 12 April in Côte d'Ivoire, according to a statement issued by a United Nations spokesman.

The talks between UNITA and the Angolan Government will be chaired by Miss Anstee and will aim to restore the cease-fire and the full implementation of the Peace Accords signed in Bicesse in May 1991.

According to the statement, the Secretary-General said he would contact Dr. Jonas Savimbi, the leader of UNITA, to determine whether the radio attacks reflected his views and those of UNITA. He also said the attacks were all the more deplorable as they were accompanied by threats against Miss Anstee's life, and reiterated his unequivocal support for her efforts to restore the peace process.

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The United Nations Peace-keeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) is owed $204 million by member countries of the Organization as of mid-March -- a "highly unsatisfactory situation" which must not be allowed to continue, writes Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali.

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In a letter addressed to all member States, dated 25 March, he says that as a result, the United Nations has been unable to meet the claims of troop-contributing countries beyond December 1981. For the current mandate period ending 15 June, only $1.68 million has so far been pledged or received against projected expenditures estimated at some $9.5 million.

In a renewed appeal to Governments and specialized agencies for voluntary contributions for the financing of UNFICYP, Mr. Boutros-Ghali said the Force was contributing to maintaining calm in Cyprus, a condition which is clearly necessary for the ongoing efforts to negotiate a political settlement. In the present situation, he writes, it is "most unfair" that troop-contributing countries should have to absorb "such a disproportionate share" of the cost of UNFICYP.

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The Western Asian Regional Preparatory Meeting -- part of the regional preparations for the United Nations International Conference on Population and Development, to be held in Cairo in 1994 -- has opened its proceedings in Amman, Jordan.

The five-day conference, organized by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), the League of Arab States and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), will evaluate population-related policies and make recommendations on relevant issues in the region. It will deal with population growth, distribution and migration; the environment and development; and family planning and health.

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